Prevalence of Trauma and PTSD in Substance Use/Abuse

- 60% to 90% of a treatment-seeking sample of substance abusers also have a history of victimization
- More than 80% of women seeking treatment for a substance use disorder reported experiencing physical/sexual abuse during their lifetime
- Between 44% and 56% of women seeking treatment for a substance use disorder had a lifetime history of PTSD
- 10.3% of the men and 26.2% of the women with a lifetime diagnosis of alcohol dependence also had a history of PTSD

The Addiction-Trauma Connection: Spirals of Recovery and Healing

Stephanie S. Covington, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.
Center for Gender and Justice
Institute for Relational Development
La Jolla, CA

11th Annual Summer Institute
Sedona, AZ
July 21, 2010

Prevalence of Trauma and PTSD in Substance Use/Abuse
Histories of Trauma / Violence among Clients Treated for Methamphetamine

Persons in treatment for methamphetamine report high rates of trauma

- 85% women
- 69% men

Most common source of trauma/violence:

- For women, was a partner (80%)
- For men, was a stranger (43%)

History of sexual abuse

- 57% women
- 16% men

Gender-Responsive Trauma Materials

- ATRIUM (Dusty Miller)
- Beyond Trauma (Stephanie Covington)
- Seeking Safety (Lisa Najavits)
- TREM (Maxine Harris)
- M-TREM (Roger Fallot)
**Beyond Trauma Themes**

- Safety
- Empowerment
- Connection (Aloneness)
- Normal reactions (Shame)
- Mind-body connection
- Substance abuse
- Woman-centered
- Uses a variety of treatment strategies: psychoeducational, cognitive, relational, expressive

---

**Trauma Three Group Models**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Recovery Stage One</th>
<th>Recovery Stage Two</th>
<th>Recovery Stage Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic task</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Remembrance and mourning</td>
<td>Reconnection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time orientation</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Present, future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Self-care</td>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>Interpersonal relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Herman, 1992, 1997

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Recovery Stage One</th>
<th>Recovery Stage Two</th>
<th>Recovery Stage Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Homogeneous</td>
<td>Homogeneous</td>
<td>Heterogeneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundaries</td>
<td>Flexible, inclusive</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Stable, slow turnover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Herman, 1992, 1997
### Trauma Three Group Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Recovery Stage One</th>
<th>Recovery Stage Two</th>
<th>Recovery Stage Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Tolerance</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Limit</td>
<td>Open-ended or repeating Didactic</td>
<td>Fixed Limit</td>
<td>Open-ended Unstructured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Twelve-step programs Survivor group</td>
<td>Goal-directed</td>
<td>Interpersonal psychotherapy group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Herman, 1992, 1997

### Process of Trauma

**Traumatic Event**
- Overwhelms the physical & psychological systems
- Intense fear, helplessness or horror

**Response to Trauma**
- Fight or Flight, Freeze, Avoided state of consciousness, body sensations, numbness, hyper-vigilance, hyper-arousal
- Sensitized Nervous System
- Changes in Brain
- Current Stress
- Reminders of Trauma, Life Events, Lifestyle
- Painful Emotional State

**Retreat**
- Isolation
- Dissociation
- Depression
- Anxiety

**Self-Destructive Action**
- Substance Abuse
- Eating Disorder
- Deliberate Self Harm
- Suicidal Actions

**Destructive Action**
- Aggression
- Violence
- Rages

### Beyond Trauma: A Healing Journey for Women

**Trauma Theory**

- Sandra Bloom, M.D.
- Mary Harvey, Ph.D.
- Judith Herman, M.D.
- Peter Levine, Ph.D.

Integrates cognitive-behavioral, expressive arts, guided imagery, and relational therapy.
When is a Woman Ready for Trauma Processing?

- She is able to use some safe coping skills
- She has no major current crises or instability (e.g., homelessness or domestic violence)
- She is willing to do this type of work
- She can reach out for help when in danger
- She is not using substances to such a severe degree that emotionally upsetting work may increase her use

When is a Woman Ready for Trauma Processing?

- Her suicidality has been evaluated and taken into account
- She is in an ongoing system of care that is stable and consistent, with no immediate planned changes (e.g., discharge from inpatient unit or residential program)
What Makes a Good Facilitator?

The following qualities in a facilitator will help to ensure a positive group experience:

• Trustworthy
• Credible
• Available
• Reliable, consistent
• Hopeful
• Warm, compassionate
• Emotionally mature

What Makes a Good Facilitator? (cont.)

• Healthy boundaries, respects confidentiality
• Committed to and interested in women’s issues
• Multi-cultural sensitivity and responsiveness
• Appropriate gender - a female should facilitate the all-female groups

What Makes a Good Facilitator? (cont.)

• If trauma survivor, she needs to feel confident that she is at a place in her own recovery that will allow for healthy and positive outcomes for herself and the women in the group.
• Content expertise, if possible
• Skills as a facilitator
Inner Self & Outer Self

• Impacts Inner Self – It can impact our inner life… our thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values. For example, some women believe that "you can’t trust anyone", and "the world is a very unsafe place."
Inner Self & Outer Self (cont.)

• Impacts Outer Self – It can impact our outer life… our outer life consists of our relationships and our behavior. Many women who have experienced trauma struggle with their relationships – families, friends, sexual relationships.

Safety

• Internal
  Internal safety is how we take care of our emotions and feelings. If we feel overwhelmed, sad, angry, lonely or frightened, we need to have ways to take care of ourselves when we are stressed.

Safety

• External
  External safety issues involve actions we take in our surroundings. We may lock our doors, choose not to go out alone at night, or un-list our telephone number. We do things to try and keep ourselves physically safe in our environment.
Beyond Trauma
Module A
Session 2
Power and Abuse

Beyond Trauma
Module B: The Impact of Trauma on Women’s Lives

Session 3  Reactions to Trauma
Session 4  How Trauma Impacts our Lives

(7 activities)
Beyond Trauma
Module B
Session 3

Reactions to Trauma

Symptoms of Trauma

- Hyper-arousal – this is the most common reaction. It includes difficulty breathing (panting, shallow, rapid), increased heart rate, cold sweats, muscular tension, tingling, racing thoughts, worry.
- Constriction – this alters breathing, muscle tone and posture. It constricts blood vessels in the skin, arms, legs, and internal organs, and tenses muscles. Hyper-arousal and constriction describe a physical response.

Symptoms of Trauma (cont.)

- Dissociation – your mind disconnects from the event or physical reality of what is happening. This is a mind-body split. This feels like “losing time” and can include loss of memory.
- Denial – this is like dissociation only not as severe. A woman ignores or fails to acknowledge a feeling or situation or acts as though it is unimportant. Dissociation and denial are part of the psychological response.
Trauma and the Brain

- Exposure to trauma can create a PTSD response in the limbic system.
- The PTSD response can become complex and chronic.

Reactions

- Physical reactions are automatic and are not controlled by us.
- Brain reactions are also automatic.
- The body stores reactions. Then the body reacts as though it is back re-living the traumatic events of the past.

Trauma History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Adolescence</th>
<th>Adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life before the event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life after the event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall impact of the event:

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Beyond Trauma
Module B
Session 4
How Trauma Impacts Our Lives

Trauma and its aftermath

- Women report the following:
- “Losing control” of life
- Re-experiencing – can’t concentrate
- Self-image changes
- Depression
- Relationship problems
- Sexuality issues

Beyond Trauma
Module C: Healing from Trauma

Session 5 The Addiction and Trauma Connection: Spirals of Recovery and Healing
Session 6 Grounding and Self-Soothing
Session 7 Abuse and the Family
Session 8 Mind and Body Connection
Session 9 The World of Feelings
Session 10 Healthy Relationships: Wheel of Love
Session 11 Endings and Beginnings
(29 activities)
Upward Spiral
Transformation

Addiction (constriction)  Recovery (expansion)

Upward Spiral
Transformation

Trauma (constriction)  Healing (expansion)

Beyond Trauma
Module C
Session 6
Grounding and Self-Soothing
Grounding

Grounding techniques are strategies to help a person who is dissociating (“losing time”, emotionally absent) “come back” into current reality and feelings.

Grounding techniques help the person become aware of the here and now. Grounding techniques can help women realize that they are in the here and now and what they are experiencing is in the past and it is not happening now.

Self - Soothing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alone</th>
<th>With Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daytime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond Trauma

Module C
Session 7

Abuse in the Family
Emotional Wellness

1. Sense having a feeling.
2. Locate feeling in the body.
3. Name the feeling.
4. Express feeling appropriately.
5. Ability to contain feeling.

Emotional Wellness

• Slow Down. Stop.
• What am I feeling?
• Does the intensity of the feeling match the situation?
• How old am I... as I have this feeling?
Beyond Trauma
Module C
Session 9
The World of Feelings

Common Feelings

- Anger
- Loss
- Shame
Beyond Trauma
Module C
Session 10
Healthy Relationships: Wheel of Love

Relationship Wheel

From the manual In Our Best Interest: A Process for Personal and Social Change, Academic Therapyplitics, Rapid Action Innovation Project, 2840 W. 40th St., Duluth, MN 55806.
### Beyond Trauma

Module C

Session 11

Endings and Beginnings

#### Themes

- Safety
- Empowerment
- Connection (Aloneness)
- Normal reactions (Shame)
- Mind-body connection
- Substance abuse
- Woman-centered
Addiction & Trauma (constriction)

Recovery & Healing (expansion)

Upward Spiral
Transformation